

Savvy Seniors Take Technology On The Road

(NAPSA)—Seniors are hitting the highways in record numbers. The Travel Industry of America (TIA) reports that travelers over the age of 55 take to the road more than any other age group. They're also hitting the information super highway as the fastest growing age demographic to log onto the Internet, according to a 2004 Pew Internet study. Quickly adopting technology, three-fourths of Americans over age 54 made a consumer electronics purchase in 2003.

Seniors are utilizing personal technology for travel-planning activities such as online research and reservations, but they may be leaving it behind as they drive off into the sunset. Of all the Internet users age 65 years and older, the Pew survey discovered "only 10 percent—have ever gone online from a place other than their home."

From planning a route and researching destinations to keeping in touch with friends and balancing the travel budget, here are some easy and fun ways seniors can enhance their journey with personal technology:

Brush Up. PCs help with everything from trip planning to communicating and calculating costs while on the road, but it's important to get familiar with the computer to make the most of it. Organizations such as SeniorNet specialize in teaching seniors how to use computers. This nonprofit group holds local computer classes and maintains a Web site, where seniors can post questions. To find a class in your area, visit www.seniornet.org.



For seniors, technology is a great way to make travel arrangements and stay in touch with the family.

Load 'Em Up. The right software is important. A good option is Microsoft Works Suite 2005, a package with six full versions of Microsoft's most popular home software programs for under \$100. Research sites of historical and cultural interest with Encarta Encyclopedia Standard 2005; easily chart and navigate your course with highly-detailed maps and directions in Streets & Trips 2005; keep a travel log in Microsoft Word 2002; organize, enhance and share digital photos with Picture It! Premium 10; track your travel budget with Microsoft Money Standard 2005; and use Microsoft Works 8 to organize your travel calendar and stay on schedule. Visit www.microsoft.com/works for more information.

Been There. Done That. Digital cameras help save money, time and memories. Did you catch Old Faithful before it stopped erupting? Instantly view photos and make sure you captured the

shot. Also, digital cameras don't use film, which makes for a lighter, less cumbersome camera bag. And since you don't have to wait to get your film developed, you can say "Wish you were here," by e-mailing digital photos to friends and family.

Park and Surf. If you're traveling year round, driving an RV helps save money on lodging and food, but today's modern RV park is not the same "Mom and Pop" campground you might remember from your childhood. Amenities such as Wi-Fi have brought RV parks into the 21st century, giving you easy access to the Internet.

Bring a Personal Assistant. Stopping at every visitor center takes lots of time out of your vacation. Instead, call one number while traveling to help with a variety of requests. Infone can make restaurant reservations, provide event listings and times and give up-to-the-minute weather information. Infone's live operators work with travelers to find information even if they don't know exactly what they are seeking. Inexpensive and reliable, Infone is an ideal travel tool for any journey. Visit www.infone.com for more information.

Technology helps combat travel costs, makes it easy to keep in touch with friends and family and provides helpful information from the planning stages to long after you've pulled back into the driveway. Next time you're packing remember to throw in some technology with the sunscreen and playing cards.